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ABSTRACT

The California Council on the Education of Teachers (CCET) is developing goals for a five-year plan of action. To facilitate planning, a survey was conducted to obtain ideas of CCET delegates from California's accredited institutions of higher education, public agencies, and professional organizations. The survey first asked individuals to list events they believed would take place during the next 5-10 years or later, which they thought could affect teacher education in California. The several hundred suggested events were condensed to 77 statements, for which the respondents were then asked to (a) indicate the date when the event was most likely to begin to have a noticeable impact, and (b) estimate the intensity of the effect. A total of 28 events which respondents believed would occur by 1980, and which would have a high positive or extreme negative impact, were selected for further attention. (This paper lists the 28 events and a few more distant events which need to be kept in mind.) These events were presented to small groups of delegates at the 1975 spring conference. The delegates compiled suggestions regarding each event's consequences for teacher education and the action/strategy which CCET should take to enhance the positive or inhibit the negative effect of each. These suggestions and ideas will be organized and integrated into CCET's five-year plan. (PB)

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Challenging Communications for Educational Thinking
California Council on the Education of Teachers

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# THE STATE OF THE THOUGHT

by Merle B. Marks*
Vice President CCET

A millstone has belabored the efforts of teacher education for the past decade and a half. Its destiny has been controlled by outside groups and forces whose primary concerns are not teacher education.

The California Council on the Education of Teachers' is interested primarily in the education of teachers and we must provide statewide leadership in this area. However, we who are committed to the task of improving teacher education have only recently left the womb of the State Department of Education and attained our complete independence.

The Cal Council-Quo Vadis, written in 1971 by our educational statesman, Jim Stone, describes the Emerging Years of the 1940's, the Productive Years of the fifties, the Lean Years of the sixties, and the more recent, Years of Independence. Stone followed with another paper, Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow in which he expresses concern that this organization now appears to be "on dead center" and that we have only a few members pushing CCET to develop priorities, agree upon principles and take action on pressing problems.

Time for action is long past due and, in the minds of some people, passed the point of no return. However, your officers, Board of Directors and numerous new delegates as well as veterans are dedicated to two ideas which are reflected in the purpose of the present study: One, Cal Council is formulating goals for a program referred to as "The Five Year Plan" through a committee headed by Gary Fenstermacher

*Resume of a speech presented to delegates of the CCET Spring Conference Spring, 1975

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and Paul Schumann and two; a second committee, this one headed by Asa Hilliard and Claire Pelton to arrange the groundwork for "Model Credential Legislation." Materials were also developed by Doug Minnis and Jim Stone for the second committee which will be used later during the Conference.

The present communication is directly related to the "Five Year Plan" and tied tangentially to the "Model Credential Legislation." The Study, known as State of the Thought is intended to express Cal Council's views on "what's happening" and what ought to happen. The results will, hopefully, have implications for the goals committee and for CCET's Board of Directors regarding future professional activities and strategies.

At the outset, several aspects need to be clarified:

1. The Approach being used is akin to many "futures" studies and is known as the Delphi Technique.
2. Our use of the technique is for the purpose of determining what our constituents (institutions, organizations and agencies) are thinking regarding future happenings or events. This is forcing us to make a grass roots exploration to assist in finding solutions to our problems. I doubt whether we have ever had such widespread delegate participation. Alvin Toffler in his new book, The Eco-Spasm Report, discusses the spasmodic economy. He says no one has any answers, only strategies. This requires "anticipatory democracy" or "grass roots planning." Without the ability to anticipate, we condemn ourselves to extinction.
3. Many of the events (of the next 5 years) are imminent for the

majority but they have already arrived for numerous institutions and organizations. Our people are developing strategies and experiencing results. Cal Council members WILL HOT HAVE TO REINVENT THE WHEEL.

4. We cannot, nor can the "experts," predict the future, though the experts' pooling of ignorance may result in more predictive truth than CCET's pooling. However, in determination of activities for formulation into strategies we are the experts.

5. Since we are the experts and are anticipating alternative future events and thinking about strategies, we will not be unprepared; we will have plans to enhance or inhibit individual occurences if they do happen. We will build upon the experience of those who are facing and will face the events whose impact will be felt between 1975 and 1980. In fact, we will mold the future to encourage the forces of good (I.e., forces which will assist us in reaching quality education for teachers) and oppose those whose action would be detrimental to our goals. In this sense, we are not dealing with the future, but we are using a method of intelligence to benefit from the past.

METHOD

Briefly told: Last winter, Form I was mailed to each delegate representing the 88 institutions, agencies and organizations of CCET. Sixty-seven of the organizations or 76 percent are represented in the returns.

Individuals were asked to list events that they believe will take place during the next five to ten years or later, which may affect

teacher education in the State of California. The hundreds of suggested events were condensed to seventy-seven statements.

Form II listed these possible occurences. Individuals who had responded to Form I were requested to indicate the date when the event was most likely to begin to have a noticeable impact or effect (90% probability). Space was provided to mark if it would never occur. In addition, delegates were asked to estimate the intensity of the value impact or effect that the event would have. (+2 represented the greatest positive value or effect, and -2 represented the greatest negative effect.)

Form II was returned by fifty-six of the 67 organizations represented in Form I. This was 64 percent of the total number of organizations in CCET.

Events which delegates believe would occur by 1980 and would have a high positive or extreme negative value or impact were identified. A total of twenty-eight were selected for further attention and are presented here.

## FINDINGS

Rated as of High Positive Value (Mentioned as +2 on a large number of returns and to occur by 1980)

Initial screening of teacher candidates beginning as early as the freshman year.

Increased shared responsibility for teacher education between districts, teachers and educational institutions.

Combined pre-service and in-service staff development offered cooperatively by school districts and institutions of higher education.

Major re-education programs to prepare in-service teachers for special areas of greater need such as bilingual-cross cultural and special education.

Significant teacher participation in development of credential requirements.

Major modifications in the Ryan Act make credential requirements less restrictive.

Periodic re-certification or credential renewal required of teachers.

Increasing number of high school teachers credentialed in more than one single subject area.

Increasing demand for special education teachers and for regular classroom teachers with special education skills.

Increased participatory management or shared decision-making among teachers, students, administrators and community.

Serrano decision implemented; greater funds available to some districts though restructured tax base.

Increased number of day care centers available for children of racial and ethnic minorities.

Incorporation of three and four year olds into the state's Early Childhood Education program.

Increase in number of K-3 Early Childhood Education programs and expansion of concept into grades 4-6.

Increasing provision for bilingual teachers and crosscultural instruction.

Increase in Career Education for all children at all levels.

Increase in technical and trade education.

Great expansion of community college programs for parents and other adults.

Significant increase in use of people from the community in classrooms.

Increased government support of students attending private colleges.

College and universities extend services beyond campus into community and remote areas not presently being served.

Rated as of Extreme Negative Impact (-2 by large number of respondents and to occur by 1980)

Less monies available for education.

Public School enrollments decline K-12.

Significant decline in post secondary enrollment.

Financial difficulties reduce number of private colleges and universities.

Rated as of Mixed Opinion (+2 and -2 on many returns and to occur by 1980)

Large cut-back in number of classroom teachers required because of reduction in teaching positions available.

Collective bargaining legalized at all levels of education.

Increasing use of competency based (performance based)instruction.

Other eventualities were identified as having potential for a strong impact upon the education of teachers. However, many constituents believed that they would occur much later than 1980 or, possibly, never occur at all. However, if they do happen, the majority will affect teacher education in a negative manner.

The fact that we believe so many negative value events will happen far into the future or will never materialize, and so many other events with positive conotations are imminent, certainly points to the optimism of CCET delegates. Realistically, it would be well to keep in mind the following more distant events:

High Positive Value

Teacher shortage as teachers employed in 50's retire.

Extreme Negative Impact

Strikes are commonplace

AFT/NEA merge

Teaching identifies with labor

Non-educators operate as managers

Compulsory education reduced to fourteen years

Teacher education institutions too irrelevant; school districts assume preservice responsibility

Mixed Opinion

Teacher organizations operate inservice programs

Higher education academic departments assume major role in teacher preparation

Several of these are emotional issues, but disagreement between individuals is far more pronounced than it is among the many organizations.

## CONCLUSIONS

The study is incomplete at this time, but the data indicate that constituency groups may produce some intra-group disagreements on controversial issues among individuals, but inter-group differences did not materialize. The range of difference among respondents in Higher Education, for example, overarched the ranges of the other groups simply because they make up the large majority. There appears to be an agreement level among our divergent interests which indicates that delegates are interested in "postholing" or zeroing in on their teacher education interests while they exclude the tangentially-related concerns of the entities which they represent. For example, one might expect teacher organizations, school administrators, school board members, P.T.A., Higher Education and local schools personnel to differ from one another on specific issues. The fact is, there is agreement or disagreement which cuts across organization lines.

No longer can it be said that Cal Council's groups have too many divergent interests to agree upon a plan of action. We do have some

differences of opinion among individuals, but we have many more areas of agreement for which plans of action can be formulated.

With the help of all delegates, we can develop ideas and suggestions regarding our response to near future events. It is possible for one event or one molder of the future to change the entire picture. However, if we react as professionals rather than technicians, we will be able to determine how the future will affect our goals and purposes. Our action can then be intelligent and purposeful. And what is equally important, we will have confidence that our efforts will be effective, therefore, we must take action.

Carlyle once wrote: "Our grand business is not to see what lies dimly at a distance, but to do what lies clearly at hand." And now, I would like us to do what lies clearly at hand, and that is to see what lies dimly at a distance.

NEXT STEPS*

At this point, the delegates in attendance (160 people representing virtually all CCET constituents) formed into groups of five to ten individuals each to determine near future (1975-80) consequences of each event for teacher education. They then were able to suggest actions for influencing the consequences. I.e., enhance the positive occurences and inhibit those happenings which might have a negative impact or value for the education of teachers.

The interchange was designed to stimulate creative ideas and cause an exchange of thought between delegates who represent the different organizations with their vested interests.

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* Explanation for audience participation

## CONSEQUENCES AND STRATEGIES

Categorization of consequences and strategies as offered by the delegates is presently being accomplished, and an example is given here of the many creative suggestions.

Event:

Initial screening of teacher candidates beginning as early as the freshman year in college.

Positive Consequences:

Prevent waste of time by unsuited students.

Students gain insight and experience prior to student teaching.

Greater self-screening occurs.

Earlier counseling can become more complete and effective.

Negative Consequences:

Freshman year is too early for many students who will be more greatly committed as juniors and seniors.

There is less basis and knowledge for screening at the freshman level than later.

An early beginning may tend towards too much conformity by forcing students into an earlier (more restrictive) plan. Tendency may be to mandate more specifics.

Suggested Strategies/Actions:

Develop and expand career counseling and programs of in-service experience for freshman.

Expand the number of types of credential programs within institutions to facilitate entrance and exit from teacher education at different points in their careers.

The first action or strategy to be developed would clearly reinforce the positive aspects of earlier screening by providing con-

crete data and experience for the neophytes. The second suggestion would also add to the effectiveness of early screening by providing a continuum for entrance which will reduce the urgency of entrance at a given time.

In addition, the second action would also dampen the negative effect by providing alternative programs which mitigate against excessive conformity and restriction.

Many excellent suggestions and creative ideas which were generated must be organized and integrated into CCET's Five Year Plan for achievement of goals. Each of the twenty-eight events and their consequences for the education of teachers, together with the suggested actions, ("accentuate the positive and eliminate the negative") will be available to the Board of Directors for use in the development of strategies.

The Board has a mandate to mark our course for the next five years and guidelines to lead the way have been presented here in the form of committee reports. Whatever plans evolve, action by Cal Council delegates is needed to insure CCET's resumption of its leadership role in the education of California's teachers.